

**Salford  
Safeguarding  
Children Partnership**



# **Support and Safeguarding in Salford: Helping children to thrive**

**Guidance for families, practitioners, and  
community members**

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## Foreword



I believe that the best way to protect children and young people is to ensure they are loved and cared for; we must do all we can to ensure they are not living in poverty or neglected and that they are given opportunities to learn and grow their aspirations. Many children in Salford have that opportunity. For those that do not we need to make sure that we provide early help when it is needed.

A critical factor in supporting and safeguarding children is the skill, effectiveness, and professionalism of people who work with vulnerable children and their families. Their jobs are exceptionally hard; something generally not recognised in the media.

I want to thank all those people for their dedication and effort to support families, children, and young people in Salford.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help, at the right time for the right duration, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

We can never entirely eliminate risks to children, but we need to be as confident as we can be that every child is supported to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

The Salford Safeguarding Partnership has two key values:

- **A child centered approach:** for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.
- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:** for services to be effective each citizen, practitioner and organisation should play their part.

The "Spirit of Salford" remains resolute. We want families, children and young people, practitioners, and the community to know who to turn to for support when needed and to be able to get it when they need it

This multi-agency partnership guidance provides you with information and assurance about how partners work together with you to achieve our ambition that every child in Salford is safe, well and able to reach their full potential.



**Simon Westwood**  
**Independent Scrutineer**  
**Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership**

## Introduction

The Support and Safeguarding guidance is for anyone who has concerns about a child, including families, workers and members of our community. It is designed to be used as a foundation to enable the correct level of support to be provided whilst embedding strengths-based, community approaches into practice. Practitioners can offer help and encouragement to families to find their own solutions and support to families when needed.

This framework replaces Salford's Threshold of need Guidance and is provided in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The document was produced by Salford Safeguarding Partnership (SSCP) in collaboration with Salford Parents for Positive Change.

SSCP work together to secure positive outcomes for all children and young people in Salford. The partnership is committed to ensuring that everyone who works with children and their families are supported to make good decisions, focus on positive outcomes, and above all else, put the child's voice at the centre of everything they do.

Prevention is seen as key by the SSCP, to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring and to seek the least intrusive response to risks presented.

Our Ethos is the golden thread to everything we do.


***"To ensure that the right help is given to children  
and families at the right time and for the right  
duration"***

The Support and Safeguarding framework embeds strong multi-agency working to help children and young people reach their potential. All services and practitioners working in and for Salford, should ensure that their policies and practices reflect the requirements set out in this guidance.

The statutory safeguarding partners would like to acknowledge all those who participated in and contributed to the development and implementation of the Support and Safeguarding guidance and framework for Salford.



**Chris Packer, Detective Superintendent (Cluster Vulnerability), Greater Manchester Police**



**Charlotte Ramsden, Strategic Director: People Directorate, Salford City Council**

## Who is this document for?

This guidance is for anyone who has concerns about a child, including families, workers and members of our community. It is designed to be used as a foundation to enable the correct level of support to be provided, whilst embedding strengths-based, community approaches into practice. Practitioners can offer help and encouragement to families, to find their own solutions and to support families when needed.

The stages of support are based on the principle that services should be provided as soon as possible, at the lowest level to the assessed needs of the child. The aim is to support families and prevent things becoming more difficult, so that families can continue to thrive with support from Universal Services. This guidance identifies four areas of support and demonstrates how they can be met.

- ✓ **Universal Services** (Getting Advice)
- ✓ **Early Help** (Getting Help)
- ✓ **Targeted Help** (Getting more specialist help)
- ✓ **Child Protection or specialist services** (Getting risk support)

**If you have concerns about a child who may need immediate protection, please contact The Bridge on **0161 603 4500** and the Police on **999**.**

## Our approach to safety and support

We recognise that all practitioners, no matter what agency they are from, have a role to play in safeguarding children from harm and promoting their welfare. Working in partnership with children and families is key and it is important to identify who will be the key practitioner

Their role is to build and develop a trusting relationship with the family and to encourage their involvement. Further information around the lead professional role can be found at:

<https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/media/1270/lead-professional-handbook-final-april-2020.pdf>)

Effective safeguarding requires trust and communication, and we must ensure that any changing circumstances are understood and put into context in terms of impact on the child. Making a judgement on need is very much about the individual child, family, and their needs.

Recognising Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences for both children and parents can change the way we respond to needs. The brain of a child growing up in a home with attentive parents will create a world view where adults are safe, predictable, and a source of love and sustenance. But the brain of a child living in a home plagued by domestic violence or neglect will create a world view where adults are unreliable and a source of fear and pain. Children carry these ideas with them and they can colour all future relationships. Depending on their experiences and outlook, children can grow to become nurturing, invested adults or mistrustful, suspicious and withholding. Working to seek what has happened to people rather than seeking what is wrong with them can change the dynamic of a relationship and recognise parents and children's ability to engage with services.

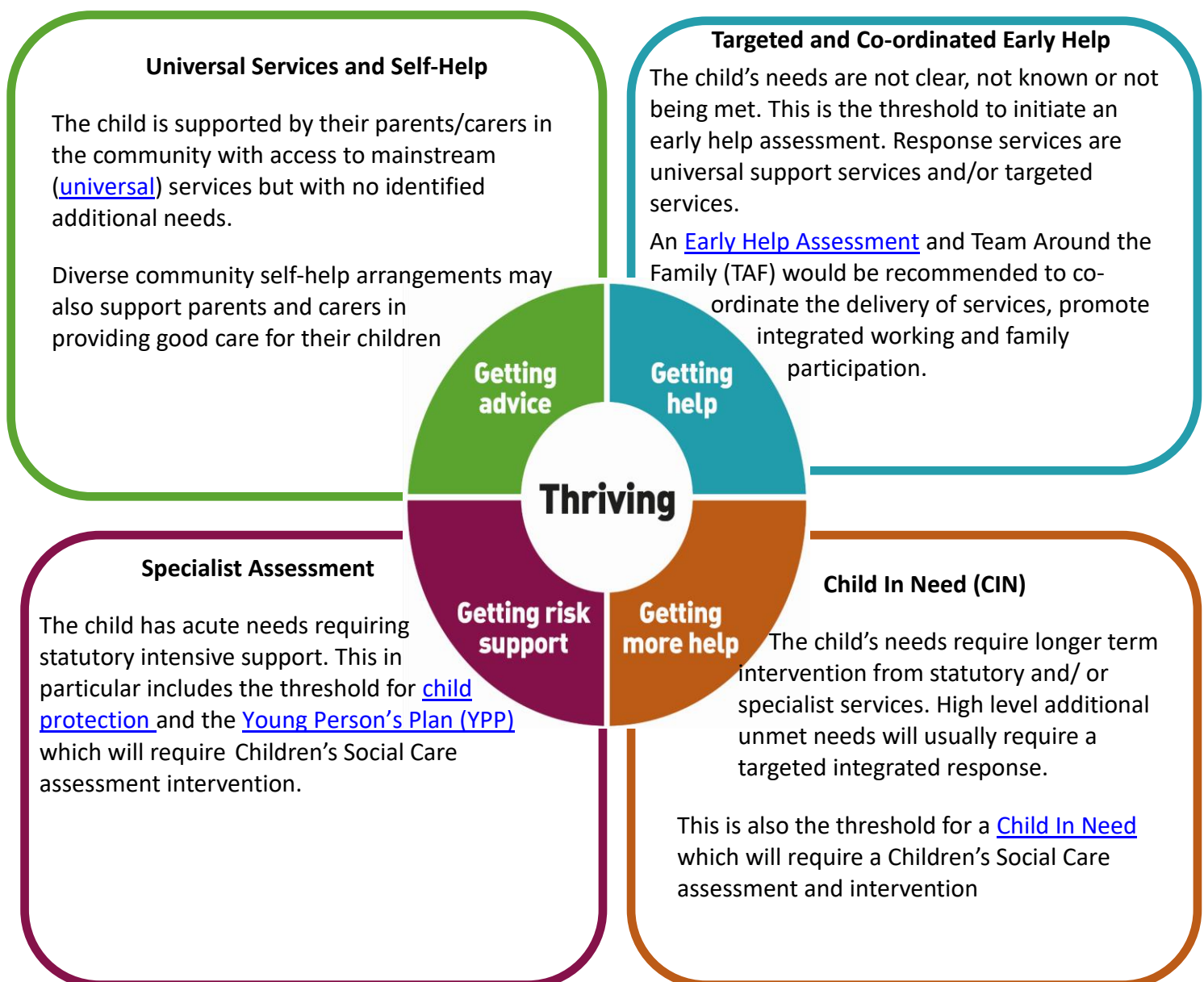
The key to getting it right for children in identifying a child and a family's area of need will always be evidence-based. In Salford there is a suite of tools to support practitioners in decision making and deciding on the next course of actions before serious or complex needs are identified, most children will have an Early Help Assessment, plan, and review to address issues at an earlier stage.

If positive change has not been achieved or sustained with this support in place a referral into Children's Social Care would be appropriate. Understanding the voice of a child helps practitioners understand the lived experience of the child

The professionals working in Universal Services are best placed to identify children or their families who might not thrive without getting extra help. Support for children must promote welfare, safeguard the child and, where possible, prevent harm before the child's needs become more complex. Salford's overriding philosophy states that if a child is in need, support should be provided using a range of interventions within a child centred approach as early as possible. Plans should take into account the feelings of the child and should be developed by working in partnership with the family. It is important that all practitioners working with children, families and adults can assess strengths and needs and provide support as soon as a problem emerges. This may be at any point in a child's life, from foundation through to teenage years.

## What do we mean by support?

In Salford there are four types of support which families are entitled to ensure they meet their children's needs and help them to thrive. We encourage practitioners to reflect on each stage with the family whenever possible but recognise there may be times this is not safe to do so. Examples of this are serious safeguarding concerns that require immediate intervention, if unsure please call the Bridge for consultation.





## Getting advice

Tools to support decision making are readily available for all practitioners working with children and families in Salford at [Professionals | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Universal services are available for all residents in Salford and are accessible throughout the city. They are readily available and accessible to all children and families in Salford to help them reach their full potential. Often universal services are provided to families by one service at a time, many you can self-refer. Examples of services offering universal services are below

Schools	Gateways or family hubs	Health visitors, Midwives and School nurses	GP Practice
Nurseries and childminders	Housing services	Charities and Voluntary groups	Faith Groups
Youth Services	Sexual Health services	Emergency services	Debt advice and welfare rights

A directory of community services can be accessed via the My City Directory webpage [mycity Directory \(salford.gov.uk\)](http://mycity Directory (salford.gov.uk))



## The Bridge Partnership - Making a Referral

If you feel a child or family needs support to thrive you can make a referral to Early Help via The Bridge. In more complex situation children and families need help to reduce risk of harm, it is important this level of support is provided as quickly as possible.

**In these circumstances' practitioners must make a referral to the Bridge Partnership via**

[Worried about a child • Salford City Council](#) or call for advice on 0161 603 4500.

The Bridge is a partnership organisation made up of staff from the council and partner agencies. They provide a 'first point of contact' for new enquires enabling members of the public and professionals to raise concerns about a child at risk to the following agencies:

- Children's Social Care (CSC)
- Health
- Police
- Early Help
- Education

It is important to ensure the family are aware you are making a referral. In very few cases a referral will be necessary without informing the family first, the Bridge can support you with this. Following referral, the Bridge will assess the information and asses the support needs of the family, this may lead to one of the following outcomes:

- The Childrens needs can continue to be met via Early Help Services
- Support is required as a Child in Need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- An assessment under Section 47 of the Children Act is needed due to a child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm as defined in Children Act 1989

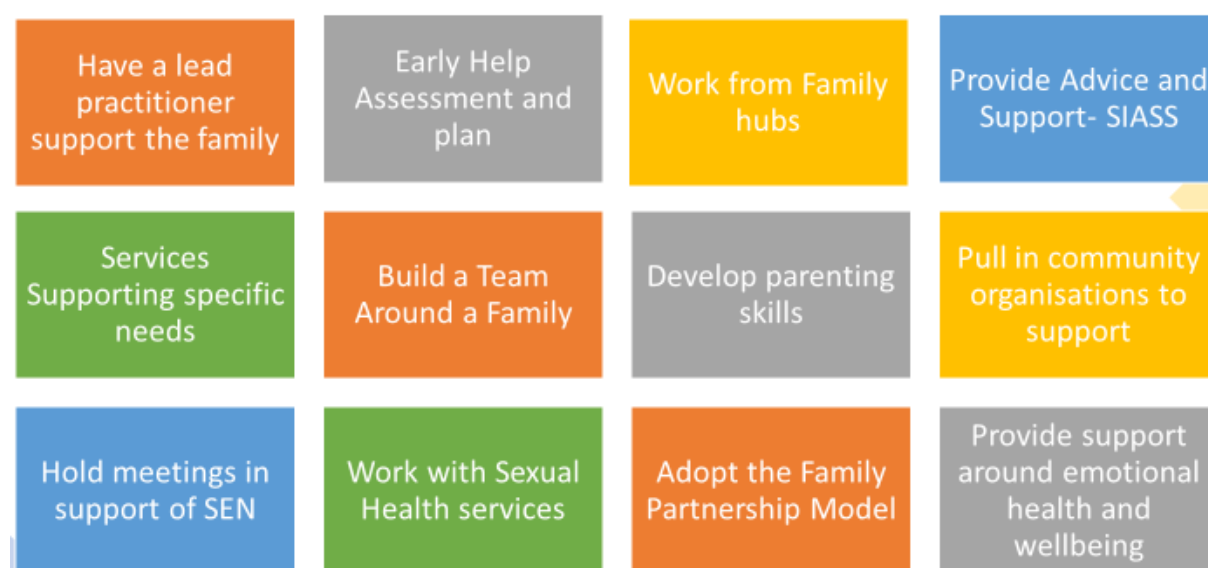


## Getting Help- Early help and assessment

Early Help supports families to come to their own solutions to the problems they are facing as early as possible, we encourage families and professionals to work together to take action to stop things getting worse. We aim to empower families to sustain the improvements made, to enable good outcomes for their children.

Salford's Early Help offer puts the responsibility on all practitioners to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs for individual children and families, irrespective of whether they are providing services to children or adults at that time.

It is important to recognise that understanding what is happening in a child's life is a process; even where it is initiated by a single event. In addition to universal services practitioners providing early help may offer:



If you need any help or support in carrying out an Early Help Assessment ring the Family Hub and ask to speak to your area co-ordinator. More useful information can be found at

[Early help for families • Salford City Council](#)

# **What is an Early Help Assessment?**

The Early Help Assessment has been developed in line with the Family Partnership Model methodology, which is an evidence-based approach to safeguarding children. The assessment provides a clear template to facilitate a meaningful assessment with the participation of the child and their whole family. It centres on the key principles of building relationships – a partnership, honesty, transparency, and appreciative inquiry to focus on the key issues and what needs to happen to improve them.

## **Areas to be assessed**

- Health
- Education
- Family and community
- Behaviour and routines
- Housing
- Employment and finances
- Being Safe

## **Consent, confidentiality, and privacy notice**

An Early Help Assessment will be completed with you and/or your family. An Early Help Assessment cannot be completed without consent, for more information on what you will be consenting to please see page six on the [Early Help Assessment Form \(Microsoft Word\)](#).

All information that is shared is kept confidential unless there is a [Safeguarding concern \(Adobe PDF\)](#).

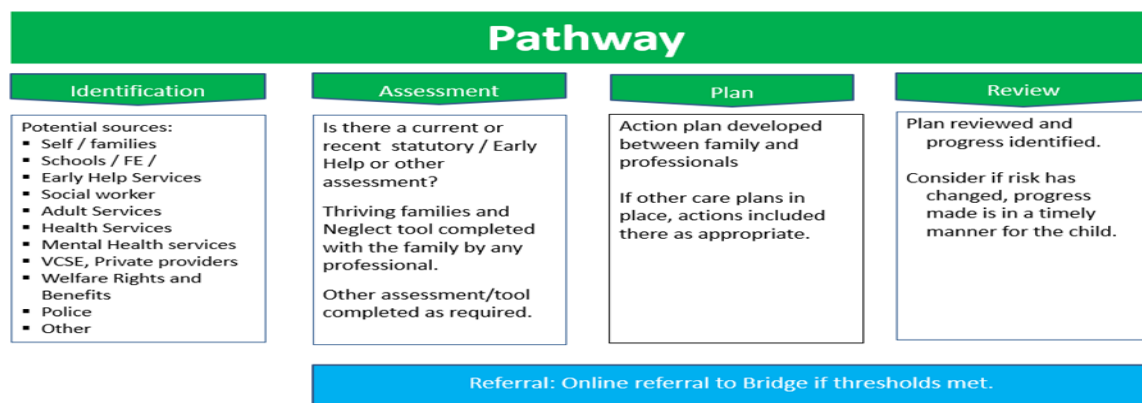
## **Family Partnership Approach:**

The Family Partnership Model (FPM) is an innovative approach based upon an explicit model of the helping process. It demonstrates how support and working in partnership, enable parents and families to overcome their difficulties. It focuses on the strengths of the family and building resilience. This will support and enable the family goals to be more effective and achievable.

Getting these decisions right can only be achieved by practitioners and families working together, with honest communication, challenge and through evidence and evaluation.

# Salford Thriving Families Assessment Tool

A range of sources and research evidence has been used to create this Thriving Families and Neglect Assessment Tool, including the original Graded Care Profile and strengths-based approaches to working with families. The pathway for completion is



Please use the sections of the tool that are required to explore the needs of the child and family you are supporting; the tool does not have to be used in its entirety if this is not required. The tool allows the tracking of drift and delay and can provide evidence for a referral to the Bridge. [The Thriving Families Assessment Tool](#) (word version) and Links to guidance can be found [here](#)

The Assessment tool is divided into five areas of children's needs and parenting:

<b>1.Relationships and Emotional Well-being:</b> 1.1 Quality of relationships and communication 1.2 Meeting emotional needs 1.3 Boundaries 1.4 Belonging and identity 1.5 Optimism and hope	<b>2.Physical Care:</b> 2.1 Food and Nutrition 2.2 Clothing 2.3 Hygiene 2.4 Health 2.5 Housing-home and space	<b>3.Safety:</b> 3.1 Awareness 3.2 In the home 3.3 In the community 3.4 In the care of others 3.5 Developing Safe Independence	<b>4.Stimulation, Education and leisure</b> 4.1 Family activities and expression 4.2 Education and expression time (play)
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## Values and Principles of the tool:

- To work WITH families, respecting their experiences and views
- To ensure the lived experience of the child, parent/carer(s) is explored and understood
- To ensure all agencies and practitioners effectively work together to support the needs of the child being met.
- To ensure that there is not delay in identifying and addressing neglect.

## Getting More Help – Targeted Support

For families who need a more joined up approach support is offered via targeted services. This support may be offered by more specific services or in some cases the lead professional may be a Social Worker who will work closely with the family and practitioners to ensure support is delivered at the right time. The Children Act (1989) Section 17, states that a child shall be considered in need if:

- They are unlikely to achieve, maintain or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority.
- Their health and development are likely to be significantly impaired, without the provision of such services.
- They are disabled
- 

Practitioners working with families can seek advice and guidance via The Bridge Partnership on 0161 603 4555. The outcome of the conversation may result in a referral being made for a Child and Family Assessment or further Early Help support. Examples of support offered in this area are shown below:



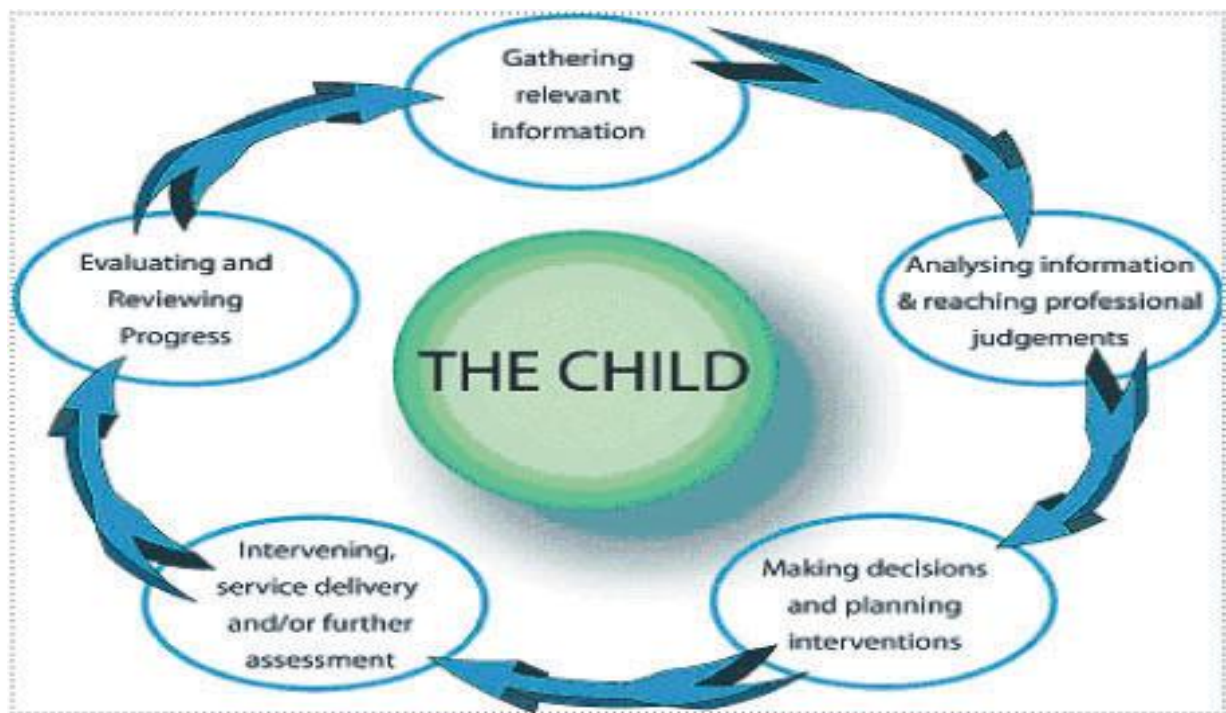
In Salford we offer a range of services and support options for children and young people living with disabilities or additional needs.

More information is available at [Local Offer | mycity Directory \(salford.gov.uk\)](#)

## What is a Social Care Assessment?

A social care assessment is a statutory Children and Family assessment often referred to as a CAFA. It covers the same areas as an Early Help Assessment but is completed by a qualified Social Worker with a focus on assessing whether a child is in need of support and protection.

Once completed, a decision is made based on evidence and analysis which may lead to the family being supported via 'Child in Need,' or 'Child Protection'. In some cases, the outcome of the assessment means the family can be supported by the Early Help Team, with the Early Help worker or another practitioner becoming the Lead Practitioner.



To complete the assessment the Social Worker will use the Framework for assessment to:

- Contact the family to discuss the referral
- Visit the children and family
- Talk to the child and parents
- Liaise with other professionals who are involved with the child and/or family
- Assess the developmental needs of the child
- Assess the ability of the parents to respond to the child's needs
- Consider the context of risk or harm
- Consider the impact the family, the family history, the wider family and environmental factors

## Child Protection- Getting Risk Support

Child Protection is part of Salford Safeguarding practice and is a mechanism to protect children who are likely to suffer harm or already suffering significant harm, as defined in the Children Act 1989. Under [Section 47 Children Act 1989](#), all local Authorities have a duty to investigate if it appears that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.

Significant Harm is any Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident, or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life.

There is no absolute criteria on which to rely on when judging what constitutes significant harm. It is important to remember to work together and use the range of tools available. If in any doubt, at any point always contact The Bridge Partnership for advice or guidance.

Examples of where a child may need protection from harm include:



## **Child Protection Conference and Planning**

In Salford we use a model of Restorative Conferencing that encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their Childrens planning. A Child Protection Conference is a meeting between family members and practitioners working with your family. Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is the first meeting, after that we refer to them as a Review Child Protection Conferences (CPR). Social Workers hold meetings in between conferences called Core Group Meetings, family members also attend these meetings.

Working Together 2018 says all people involved should 'work together to safeguard the child from harm in the future, taking timely, effective action according to the plan agreed.' More information can be found here: [Working Together Guidance](#)



## Children with Disabilities

In Salford services for children and young people with a disability have been developed within the context of the Children Act 1989 (2004), the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (2005), Carers Equal Opportunities Act 2004, the Carers and Disabled Children Act (2000) and the Children and Families Act (2014). The basis of this approach is that children with a disability are regarded as children first and, as children with impairment, second.

Children with a disability are therefore not classified by assessment, according to their physical or mental impairment, but assessed according to the impact any impairment has on their quality of life and that of their families.

Most children in Salford who require services will receive those through universal provisions within their local community. The same should be true for children with disabilities, who can be supported through the Local Offer in Salford. Only when it has been identified via a Family Assessment that the impact of the child's impairment on their life is as such, that it cannot be addressed by universal provisions or the Local Offer, a referral for an assessment should be made to the Children with Disability Team.

The eligibility criteria for the Children with Disability Team in Salford are:

1. Children and their families whose main need for services arises out of the children's disabilities or intrinsic condition

And,

2. These conditions have a substantial or critical impact on the quality of the child/young person and/or their families' lives;

And,

3. The needs cannot be met by Universal/Targeted services alone.

In such circumstances, social care and key partner agencies are required to maintain, where possible and appropriate, the child/young person safely within their family and community.

Salford's Children with Disabilities Teamwork with Children that are 'Getting More Help' or 'Getting Risk Support'. More services and support can be found via

[Local Offer | mycity Directory \(salford.gov.uk\)](https://www.salford.gov.uk/local-offer)

# Understanding Contextualised Safeguarding

**Complex Safeguarding** is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm outside of their family home

It articulates the recognition that the current child protection system, legislation and practice does not adequately address the extra-familial harm and risk facing many young people. The definition of Complex Safeguarding is:

*'Criminal activity (often organised), or behaviour associated to criminality, involving vulnerable children / young people, where there is exploitation and / or a clear or implied safeguarding concern'*

**Contextual Safeguarding** is used to describe a range of safeguarding issues that adolescents face, in particular those related to criminality and exploitation. This includes, but is not limited to, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, Modern Slavery, including Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Like complex safeguarding, contextual safeguarding recognises that as young people grow up and become more independent of their families, the risks that they face change. The different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Contextual safeguarding offers an approach for working with contexts and communities by understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

**Transitional Safeguarding** is a term that has been used to highlight the need to improve the safeguarding response to older teenagers and young adults in a way that recognises their developmental needs. This argument is made in a briefing for local authorities, published in 2018, that draws on both Contextual Safeguarding and Complex Safeguarding as well as emerging evidence that adolescence extends into the early/mid-twenties (Sawyer et al, 2018).

In Salford all young people over the age of 15 years experiencing harm outside their family home in the community receive support tailored to their identified risk and needs via a young person's plan.

More information can be found at [Young Person's Plan | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

## Cared for children

In some circumstances children need to live away from their birth parents. There are lots of different reasons children might become cared for by the local authority. It might be because living with their birth parents just wasn't working or because people are worried about their safety. Some children become looked after when they are babies, some are teenagers and others only come into care for a short time then go back home to live with their parents.

**Accommodated by the local authority under s.20 Children Act 1989** - This means the local authority has agreement with the parents to 'accommodate' the child somewhere else. The local authority **does not** have parental responsibility and will need to seek parental consent for all areas of child's life including medical consent. Examples of S.20:

- Having no person with parental responsibility for them
- Being lost or abandoned; or
- Having reached the age of 16, his/her welfare is likely to be seriously prejudiced if he/she is not provided with accommodation; or
- Accommodating the child would safeguard or promote his/her welfare (even though a person who has parental responsibility for him is able to provide him with accommodation), provided that that person does not object.
- If a young person in 16 or 17 they can overrule the right to remove.

**Care Orders under s.31 Children Act 1989** - A care order is granted by the courts and means the local authority legally share responsibility for the child. This can be on an Interim basis or longer term. Care Orders are granted when:

- The child is at risk of suffering harm, either now or in the future.
- The risk is as a result of the care being provided to the child by someone with parental responsibility; or
- The child is at risk of harm as those with parental responsibility are unable to control them.

In very exceptional circumstances children and young people may become subject to a Police Protection Order (PPO) or an Emergency Protection Order (EPO). These orders are used in emergency situations where there are significant concerns the child is in immediate danger. In these circumstances the police and a qualified Social Worker will work together to assist straight away.

It's important to recognise cared for children can access support from a range of agencies including early help and universal services at different stages in their lives. Additional information can be found at:

[1.3.4 Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com/1.3.4-Care-and-Supervision-Proceedings-and-the-Public-Law-Outline)

[2.2.3 Joint Protocol between Housing Services and Children's Services for 16 and 17 Year Olds \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com/2.2.3-Joint-Protocol-between-Housing-Services-and-Children's-Services-for-16-and-17-Year-Olds)

## Private Fostering Arrangements

The term Private fostering is used when a child up to 16 years of age is living and looked after by someone outside of their close family for 28 days (four weeks) or more.

Private fostering does not include being cared for by anyone who already has parental responsibility, such as a Special Guardianship order. Information relating to this can be found in this guidance under 'Cared for Children

If a child is looked after by any of the people below, this is not private fostering arrangement:

- biological parents or stepparents
- biological aunts and uncles
- Half or full siblings
- Biological or step grandparents

Examples of Private Fostering include:

- Neighbour
- Friend
- Child's friend's parents
- Non-biological 'aunt' or 'uncle'
- Great aunt or uncle
- Cousin
- Someone looking after a student studying away from home

In all cases of private fostering, the council needs to be notified. This is so that we can make sure the child is safe. Children Services can often offer support to people who are privately fostering through the [Salford Private Fostering Link](#).

You can let us know if you think you or someone you know is privately fostering by completing the [private fostering form](#).

For more information you can contact the private fostering officer on 0161 779 7860 or alternately contact the Bridge Partnership.

## Working with young people in secure estates

All children and young people living away from home including those in custodial secure estate should receive the same level of care as with living with reasonable parents or carers in the community.

There are three types of secure accommodation for children and young people:

**Young Offender Institutions (YOIs)** - facilities run by both the Public & Private Prison Service to accommodate young people who have committed a criminal offence aged 15- to 17-year-olds.

**Secure Training Centres (STCs)** - STCs are purpose-built centres for young offenders up to the age of 17. STCs can accommodate both male and female young people who are held separately. They are run by private operators under contracts, which set out detailed operational requirements. There are only 3 STCs across England and Wales.

**Secure Children's Homes (SCHs)** - Most SCHs are run by local authority children's social care. They can also be run by private or voluntary organisations. They accommodate children and young people who are placed there for the protection of themselves or others, and for those placed under criminal justice legislation. SCHs are generally used to accommodate young offenders aged 12 to 14, girls up to the age of 16, and 15 to 16-year-old boys who are assessed as vulnerable.

In Salford we have 1 Secure Childrens Home called Barton Moss.

All young people in secure estates should be referred to the local authority they usually live in. This is to ensure the young person, and in some circumstances their family are accessing the right support. In Salford you can contact The Bridge Partnership on 0161 603 4555 for further information.

## Asset based approaches

Strength based models are used in Salford, focusing on the assets of the person or community and resources, to assess risk and concerns. The focus is to identify solutions to challenges or issues so that each individual child is safe and can thrive Salford uses a “Holistic, approach” utilising various specialist partnership agencies to provide the best bespoke services that person, young person, family, or community require.

Examples of Asset or Strength based approaches include:



Strengths based approaches are designed to help children and their families identify their strengths and work out how they can build on them. Where there are worries, we look specifically at whether the child has experienced harm, the impact this has on them and the evidence for this, as well as what complicates the situation.

We then, importantly, look at what the family, children services and practitioners can do to support the family to keep the children safe, well and the best they can be. Following this, a plan is put together.

While the support in this guidance focuses on children’s needs, we recognise that parents also need to meet their own needs. This might mean getting help for their own physical or mental health needs, support for domestic abuse, housing, debt, or welfare advice. This guidance signposts services which can help parents and any assessment of need will consider the support available to help address these challenges.

# **Building on and recognising family strengths**

Practitioners will need to consider any type of worry or concern about a child or family in the context of strength-based practice. The questions below are based on the “Signs of Safety Model” and are used when attending Early Help, Child In Need (CIN) meetings, Child Protection conferences and Core Group meetings. As the model is strengths based and solution focussed, we always start with ‘working well questions such as some of the following:

## **What’s working well**

- What have been the things that have minimised the harm or made things better?
- Who else helps to keep the child and family safe, happy, and well?
- In relation to the worry, what do the family and child do already that makes things even a little better?

## **What are you worried about?**

- What have you seen or heard that worries you? Who saw this and what did they see?
- What are you worried will happen if nothing changes?
- Have things become worse recently?
- What has the impact been on the child? What does their day-to-day look like?

## **What needs to happen**

- What do you think needs to happen to make the situation better?
- Are there any questions that need to be asked to clarify the situation?

What do the family and child want to happen? How do they think they could make things better?



# Family Network Meetings & Family Group Conferencing

Families in Salford are resourceful and are recognised as often having the solutions to their own problems. It is important for families to have people around them to support them, to make sure any plan in place is achievable and, importantly, to keep the child safe, happy, and well. This builds the families resilience and supports sustainable long term changes.

Is there anyone else supporting me right now ?

Who would I go to if the children were poorly?

Who do I talk to about my worries?

Who cares about my children?

Who would the children want around ?

Who have I told about my worries before, could they help me again?

Is there anyone in my network that could help me?

Would I like my lead professional to support in asking my network for help ?



Practitioners should encourage families to think about their current support network and how to expand this if needed. This can be through family members, community group, faith groups or discovering new interests. Practitioners can facilitate or support in bringing people together as part of a family meeting. In addition to this specialist FGC practitioners are available to support via 0161 686 5264 or [fgc@salford.gov.uk](mailto:fgc@salford.gov.uk)

## Assessment Principles

Assessments help practitioners to make informed decisions on the safety and strengths, harm, and impact on a child and, importantly, what needs to happen. The risks posed and any additional needs which require a level of support must be gathered to reach a judgement on how to proceed with a case. The assessment will provide a holistic, evidence-based view of the child and their family proportionate to need and a true reflection of their day-to-day lives.

Key principles involved in completing assessments are:

- ✓ Child centred and involve the child, the family, and their networks.
- ✓ Give families the opportunities to come to their own solutions.
- ✓ Factual and evidence-based building on family strengths and identifying difficulties
- ✓ Assessments are considered and linked by a co-ordinated approach; this prevents families having to tell their story again.
- ✓ Ensure equality of opportunity and a respect for Diversity including family structures, culture, religion, and ethnic origin.
- ✓ It is outcome focused and leads to action being taken.
- ✓ It is transparent and open to challenge.
- ✓ Are used in conjunction with evidence-based tools



## Recording what we do

All involvement with children and families should be recorded appropriately and in accordance with each agency's procedures. It is important the recordings are clear, concise, distinguish fact from opinion, respectful to those involved and explain the evidence and analysis made. Any decisions made should be clearly recorded, including the people responsible and timescales. Details of who was consulted such as full name and contact details must be included. Where contact has been tried but not succeeded this must also be recorded.

### Top Tips for recording

- ✓ Language – be clear and remember children and families may want to see recordings at a later date.
- ✓ Evidence based - whilst professional opinion is useful, recording just remain factual and child focused
- ✓ Childrens and family's views and voice - capturing the child's voice is key to understanding lived experience
- ✓ Demonstrates strengths and worries – understanding progress made and been able to review progress and impact of planning
- ✓ Purposeful and outcome focused - be clear what the family and you want to achieve. Remember every session needs purpose

Salford Youth Council looked at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and what they needed to see to fulfil their potential and grow up safe. They told us ten things that every child deserves. 'Hands of Need' was developed by the young people to show what they think are important for children to thrive.



Developed by Salford Youth Council  
October 2019



## Information Sharing

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment, and services.

Early sharing of information is the key to providing effective Early Help where there are emerging problems. Sharing information can also be essential to put effective child protection services in place. Safeguarding Reviews have shown how poor information sharing can lead to poor outcomes for children and in the very worst cases contributed to the deaths or serious injuries of children.

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements:

- All organisations should have arrangements in place which clearly set out the processes and principles for sharing information between each other; with practitioners and with the SSCP. No practitioner should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child safe.
- If a practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, they should share the information initially with their Line Manager.
- Information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, parents, and carers (2015) supports frontline practitioners, working in child or adult services, who must make decisions about sharing personal information on a case-by-case basis.

The advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information effectively and can be used to supplement local guidance and encourage good practice in information sharing.

Information sharing guidance is available on [Information sharing: advice for practitioners \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## Seven golden rules to sharing information

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and Human Rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared. Seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. In summary the 7 Golden Rules for sharing Information: Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: (1 & 2) ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it and that it is proportionate to Risk identified. (3) That it is only shared with those individuals who need to have it. (4 & 5) That it is accurate and adequate. (6) That it is shared in a timely fashion, and (7) It is shared securely
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it - whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

## Still Worried?

When working with families, practitioners may have differences of opinion and disagree on the next course of action. Effective working relationships work on a common goal. In all cases, children and family's outcomes must remain central. There are a range of situations in which practitioner disagreements may arise.

### *Principles in practice:*

- Challenge is positive and should always be focused on the desired outcome for the child and family.
- The safety and wellbeing of the child is always paramount.
- It is the responsibility of each individual professional and agency to progress challenge if they are not in agreement with the outcome of any aspect of assessment, planning or intervention or any level of need and support.
- Challenge should be restorative, and relationship based. Language should therefore be respectful and where possible discussions with the relevant practitioners should take place first.
- Challenge and escalation should be resolved in a timely manner
- Challenge must be evidenced based and recorded on the child's file, including details or how the resolution improved outcomes for the child and/or family
- If you have an immediate concern regarding the safety of a child, this should be reported to the Bridge. Ensure your safeguarding lead is consulted with throughout the escalation process.

Please attempt to resolve any disagreements informally, before initiating the Formal process. When issues cannot be resolved informally the escalation protocol should be used to reach a satisfactory outcome that is in the best interests of the child.

More information and flow chart can be found at

[effective-challenge-and-escalation-procedure-april-2020.pdf \(salford.gov.uk\)](#)